

# **Office of Vermont Health Access Selects GMMB as Vendor to Lead Health Care Reform Outreach and Enrollment Activities**

Waterbury, Vt. – Governor Jim Douglas and Agency of Human Services (AHS) Secretary Cynthia LaWare announced today that the Office of Vermont Health Access (OVHA) has selected GMMB as the vendor to lead Vermont's health care reform outreach and enrollment activities, pending the successful outcome of contract negotiations. The final contract is anticipated to be completed within the next couple of weeks.

The Health Care Affordability Act, Vermont's landmark healthcare legislation, charged the AHS/OVHA with developing and implementing outreach and enrollment activities to reduce the number of uninsured by enrolling eligible Vermonters into Vermont's public health care programs, such as the Vermont Health Access Plan (VHAP) and Dr. Dynasaur, and by encouraging Vermonters to enroll in their employer-sponsored insurance programs or the new Catamount Health Plan.

Vermont's current uninsured rate is 9.8% or 61,000 Vermonters. "The goal is to reduce the 9.8% to 4% by 2010," Douglas noted. "GMMB has the expertise to establish the foundation for reaching our goal."

GMMB will collaborate with the AHS/OVHA, the Director of Health Care Reform Implementation, health insurers, businesses and other interested parties to research groups of uninsured Vermonters, and develop and implement outreach activities to target these groups for enrollment.

It is estimated that 51 percent of uninsured Vermonters are eligible for one of Vermont's public health care programs but not yet enrolled. The Health Care Affordability Act includes multiple initiatives designed to appeal to the spectrum of the uninsured. A new insurance product, the Catamount Health Plan, is designed to make affordable and comprehensive commercial coverage available to all uninsured Vermonters by October 1, 2007. Also, Vermont will provide premium assistance on a sliding scale basis to Catamount Health Plan enrollees and eligible Vermonters who are enrolled in their employer-sponsored health insurance plan.

Since 1999, GMMB has helped the uninsured secure health insurance coverage through national and state-level efforts. GMMB specializes in integrated outreach campaigns and has a long record of successfully motivating behavioral change among hard-to-reach groups.

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